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CURRENT LITERATURE

BOOK REVIEWS

Manual of tree diseases[1]

This first wholly American work in book form on the diseases of forest trees is one of "The Rural Manuals" edited by L. H. BAILEY, and in conformity with the general plan of this series has been written primarily for the general public. Insect and other animal injuries are not included. The treatment of the subject throughout is simple and direct; the diseases are concisely described, and methods of control indicated. The first 4 chapters deal with such maladies of biotic and abiotic origin as are common to many kinds of trees and are respectively entitled "Seedling diseases and injuries," "Leaf diseases and injuries," "Body and branch diseases and injuries," and "Root diseases and injuries." Chapters v–xxxii are devoted to an account of the more "specific" diseases, one chapter to each generic host group, beginning with the alders. The arrangement of the chapters is alphabetical according to the English host group names. Two chapters follow, one on "Tree surgery," the other on "Spraying and dusting for leaf diseases." The book is equipped with a glossary, a general bibliography of tree diseases, and an excellent index.

This work, although not intended as a textbook, will be welcomed by all students of plant pathology because it is the only summary available of the diseases of the forest trees of the United States and of Canada, and because it includes many classified references to the literature. The writing of the book reveals the limitations of forest pathology in America; the number of workers in this field has been small, the subject matter is as yet largely unexplored, and the applications of the results so far attained have been restricted. The author clearly recognizes these facts, and does not fail to point out the direction investigations should follow; in so doing he makes a contribution of prime importance.—J. H. FAULL.

MINOR NOTICES

Our national forests.—The period of reconstruction not less than the progress of the war has directed, in a special manner, the attention of our people to their natural resources and to the desirability of properly utilizing and conserving them. Thus no more timely moment could be chosen for the publication of some account of our forest wealth as shown in the establishment and management of our national forests. BOERKER[2] has collected and organized a mass of scattered data and presented them in a very readable form. While particularly well suited in its style of presentation to appeal to the general public, it will prove equally welcome to foresters and botanists who wish to know the history of the organization of these forests and the different forms of administration under which they have attained their present dimensions. The addition of a bibliography would have added much to the scientific value of the volume without detracting from its popular interest. It may also be criticized because of the lack of a suitable index to facilitate reference; but on the whole the work is well done, the material has been well organized, is attractively presented, and so far as the reviewer is able to judge the data are entirely accurate and reliable.—GEO. D. FULLER.

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[1] RANKIN, W. HOWARD, Manual of tree diseases. pp. 398. *figs. 70.* 1918. New York: Macmillan Co.

Grasses and grasslands of South Africa.—In order to facilitate the study of the extensive grasslands of South Africa, BEWS[3] has prepared a series of keys for the identification of the 500 species of grasses which form so conspicuous a portion of the flora of that part of the continent. These keys seem to be well suited to serve the purpose for which they are intended, but the other parts of the volume are of far more interest to the American reader. In them are discussed: (1) the structural and ecological characteristics of the principal species; (2) general character of the grasslands and the development of the various association types; and (3) economic application of the ecological principles involved. It is interesting to find types comparable to the "short grass," "wire grass," and "prairie grass" of North America, as well as a tall coarse *Andropogon* association, this last developing upon potential woodland areas, and a mountain tussock grassland. The discussion of the successional relations of these and other association types into which grasses enter gives a comprehensive general sketch of the plant communities of the major portion of South Africa.

In the final chapter the feeding value of the different types of grassland, as well as the comparative merits of native and introduced species, is discussed. The effect upon the productivity of various types of grassland by various kinds of grazing and the results from grass burning are considered and some of the ecological problems involved are pointed out. An appendix contains a list of English, Dutch, Zulu, and Sesuto names of the more important species.—GEO. D. FULLER.

NOTES FOR STUDENTS

Vegetation of Cape Breton.—Separated from the mainland of Nova Scotia by a narrow strait, the island of Cape Breton lies between the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Atlantic in latitude 45–47° N. It possesses a climate

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[2] BOERKER, RICHARD, H.D., Our national forests. pp. lxix+238. *figs. 80.* 1918. New York: Macmillan Co.

[3] BEWS, J. W., The grasses and grasslands of South Africa. 8vo. pp. 161. *figs. 24. map.* Pietermaritzburg: Davis & Sons. $2.00 (postpaid from author).